AGENCY SCOPING DOCUMENTS

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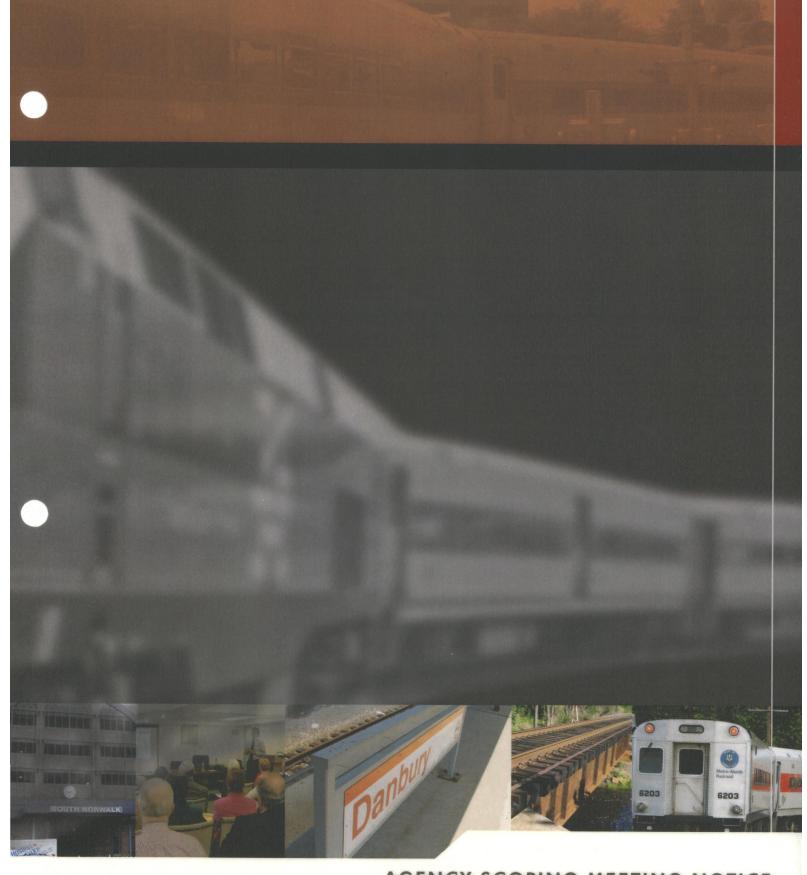
This section contains the following information:

1. Agency Scoping Meeting Notice:

• A letter dated May 12, 2008 to Federal Agencies, State Agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations from Mr. Edgar T. Hurle, Connecticut Department of Transportation. The subject of the letter was the Danbury Branch Line Study – Phase 2 Alternatives Analysis/NEPA and CEPA Documentation.

The letter gave notice to the above referenced parties that "An agency scoping meeting in compliance with NEPA and CEPA has been scheduled for June 17, 2008, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., at Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury, CT Caucus Room, (third floor), to discuss the Phase 2 Scope of Work and Study Process. Attached to the letter were copies of Executive Summary of the Phase 1 Study and Analysis and the revised Draft Scope of Services for review and comment.

- Letter announcing the date, time and place of the agency scoping meeting and the date, time and place of the three public meetings.
- The Agency Scoping Meeting agenda.
- 2. Agency Scoping Meeting Minutes
- 3. US Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Scope of Service Comments
- 4. US Army Corps of Engineers Scope of Service Comments
- 5. Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Scope of Service Comments



AGENCY SCOPING MEETING NOTICE



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546 NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546 Phone:

May 12, 2008



To:

Federal Agencies

State Agencies

Metropolitan Planning Organizations

From:

Edgar T. Hurle

Transportation Planning Director

Bureau of Policy and Planning

Subject:

Danbury Branch Line Study – Phase 2

Alternatives Analysis / NEPA and CEPA Documentation

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), will be preparing an Alternative Analysis (AA) and environmental documentation regarding proposals for improving the Danbury Branch rail line between South Norwalk and New Milford. It is anticipated that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Connecticut (CT) Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) will be prepared in accordance with the National (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental Policy Acts (CEPA). ConnDOT has completed the Phase 1 Feasibility Study Danbury Branch Electrification. An agency scoping meeting in compliance with NEPA and CEPA has been scheduled for June 17, 2008, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., at Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury, CT, Caucus Room (third floor), to discuss the Phase 2 Scope of Services and Study process.

The Alternatives recommended for further consideration as a result of the Phase 1 analysis include: (A) No Build; (B) Transportation System Management; (C) South Norwalk to Danbury Improvements including electrification, passing sidings, and minor track realignment; (D) Extension of diesel passenger service from Danbury to New Milford, with improvements, including new stations and minor track realignment; and (E) Partial Electrification from South Norwalk to the vicinity of Route 15. Enclosed for your information is the Executive Summary of the Phase 1 Study analysis and findings.

Phase 2 of this Study will include a more detailed evaluation of the five alternatives selected from Phase 1 (noted above), and the development of a recommended implementation plan. Issues that will be analyzed in depth include operational characteristics, infrastructure needs, the effects of the plan on noise, air, water quality, and cultural and recreational resources, as well as other social, economic and environmental effects, and capital and operating costs.

The enclosed Phase 2 Scope of Services for the AA/EIS/EIE includes many of the suggestions made during previous coordination and reviews (Summer 2006). As part of the process to finalize the Study scope in accordance with NEPA and CEPA, ConnDOT requests your comments on the Phase 2 Scope of Services and participation at the June 17, 2008 meeting. This review will be used to:

-2-

- Identify the range of important concerns and potential impacts to be addressed in the AA/EIS/EIE.
- Identify and eliminate from the detailed Study, the issues which are not critical or which have been addressed by prior review.
- Identify other environmental review and consultation requirements.
- Develop a consensus regarding the Study process.
- Assist in the development of a coordinated plan.

Since the rail line under study follows the Housatonic, Still, and Norwalk River corridors and their associated wetlands, any impacts to those regulated areas will require a Section 404 permit and a Connecticut Inland Wetland and/or Stream Channel Encroachment Line Permit; and may affect fish and wildlife habitats. This rail corridor also contributes to the economic vitality of the Study region and state. Therefore, due to the special expertise you can provide, ConnDOT requests that your agency reaffirm its participation in this Study as a cooperating agency.

As such, ConnDOT expects your agency's involvement to entail only those areas under its jurisdiction and expertise, and no direct writing or analysis will be necessary for document preparation. The activities that will be taken to maximize interagency cooperation may include the following:

- 1. Invitations for your agency to participate in scoping meetings and other meetings.
- 2. Consultation with your agency on any relevant technical studies that will be required for the project.
- 3. Organizing joint field reviews.
- 4. Providing your agency with project information, including Study results.
- 5. Requesting that your agency review relevant sections of the Draft EIS/EIE prior to its release for comment by the public and other agencies.
- 6. Encourage your agency to use the above documents to express your views on subjects within your jurisdiction or expertise.
- 7. Include information in the project environmental documents that cooperating agencies need to discharge their NEPA and CEPA responsibilities, and any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances.

Your agency has the right to expect that the AA/EIS/EIE will enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise, your agency has the obligation to inform ConnDOT if, at any point in the process, your needs are not being met. It is also expected that

at the completion of this Study, the AA/EIS/EIE and ConnDOT's public involvement process will satisfy all NEPA and CEPA requirements, including those related to the consideration of alternatives, and the identification of environmental consequences and mitigation. Furthermore, ConnDOT intends to utilize the AA/EIS/EIE and subsequent Record of Decision as the decision-making documents and as the basis for future permit applications.

As indicated in the Phase 1 documentation and Phase 2 Scope of Services, this Study will continue to be conducted through a public process, with the participation of a Study Advisory Committee and in cooperation with federal, state and regional agencies.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, it is requested that you appoint a proxy to attend in your place. Please contact Mr. Andrew Davis, ConnDOT's Project Manager, at (860) 594-2157 or by e-mail at andrew.h.davis@po.state.ct.us to acknowledge your attendance at the June 17, 2008 meeting. In addition, Public Scoping meetings have also been scheduled as follows:

- June 17, 2008: New Milford Town Hall (Paul Martin Conference Room), 10 Main Street, New Milford, CT.
- June 18, 2008: Wilton Town Hall (Annex Building Meeting Room A), 238 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT.
- June 19, 2008: Ridgefield Town Hall (Large Conference Room), 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT.

The study team will be available at 6:00 p.m., at each of these public meetings, with a brief presentation beginning at 7:00 p.m. Agencies are also invited to participate in the public meetings.

Information regarding the Danbury Branch Line Study, including published reports and meeting notices can be viewed on the Study web site at www.danburybranchstudy.com.

Enclosures

cc: <u>Mr. Stephen A. Gazillo – Washington Group International</u>

Mailing List

Danbury Branch Line Study – Phase 2 Alternatives Analysis / NEPA and CEPA Documentation

Mr. Vernon B. Lang Assistant Supervisor New England Area U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 70 Commercial Street Suite 300 Concord, NH 03301-5087

Mr. Michael Marsh U.S. Environmental Protection Agency New England Region 1 1 Congress Street, Suite 1 Boston, MA 02114

Ms. Susan K. Lee
Department of the Army
New England District - Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Division
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Mr. John Cilcota Senior Transportation Analyst Federal Railroad Administration 1120 Vermont Ave, NW Washington, DC 2005

Ms. Nancy Danzig
Director of Planning and Program
Development
Federal Transit Administration, Region II
One Bowling Green, Room 429
New York, NY 10004

Mr. Donald Burns Senior Planner Federal Transit Administration, Region II One Bowling Green, Room 429 New York, NY 10004-1415 Mr. Peter S. Simmons Community Development Director Department of Economic and Community Development 505 Hudson Street Hartford, CT 06106

Mr. Philip L. Smith Under Secretary Office of Policy and Management 450 Capitol Avenue Hartford CT 06106

Mr. Frederick L. Riese Senior Environmental Analyst Department of Environmental Protection 79 Elm Street Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Mr. Karl J. Wagener Executive Director Connecticut Council on Environmental Quality 79 Elm Street Hartford, CT 06106

Dr. David Poirier State Historic Preservation Office 1 Constitution Plaza, Second Floor Hartford, CT 06106

Dr. Floyd Lapp
Executive Director
South Western Regional Planning Agency
888 Washington Boulevard – 3rd Floor
Stamford, CT 06901

Mr. Jonathan C. Chew Executive Director Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials Old Town Hall Route 25 Brookfield, CT 06804



April 30, 2008

RE: Notice of Scoping Meetings, Danbury Branch Electrification

An agency scoping meeting will be held on June 17, 2008, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Town of Danbury, Caucus Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810. The purpose of the Agency Scoping meeting is to update the agencies and provide an overview of the project, to allow agencies to determine their level of interest in the project, and to allow agencies to help identify the proposed project's level of impact on environmental, social, and economic resources.

A series of three Public Scoping Meetings will be held in the Study corridor: The public scoping meetings will be held the week of June 16, 2008 from 6:30 p.m. to: 8:00 p.m. in the Towns of Wilton, Ridgefield and New Milford.

June 17th – E. Paul Martin Conference Room (top floor) 10 Main Street, New Milford, CT 06776

June 18 – 238 Danbury Road, Annex Building, Meeting Room A, Wilton, CT 06897

June 19th – 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT Town Hall (large conference room)

The project's purpose and need, and the initial set of alternatives proposed for the study will be presented at these meetings. Comments may be given verbally or in writing at the scoping meetings. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet special needs. The meetings locations will be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Your attendance at this meeting is strongly encouraged. Please confirm whether you will attend by contacting me by email at steve.gazillo@wgint.com or by calling me at (860) 529-8882. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Very truly yours,

Stephen A. Gazillo, AICP

Washington Group Project Manager



Danbury Branch Phase II Alternatives Analysis EIS NEPA Scoping Coordination Meeting Date: June 17, 2008 Time: 1:00 PM

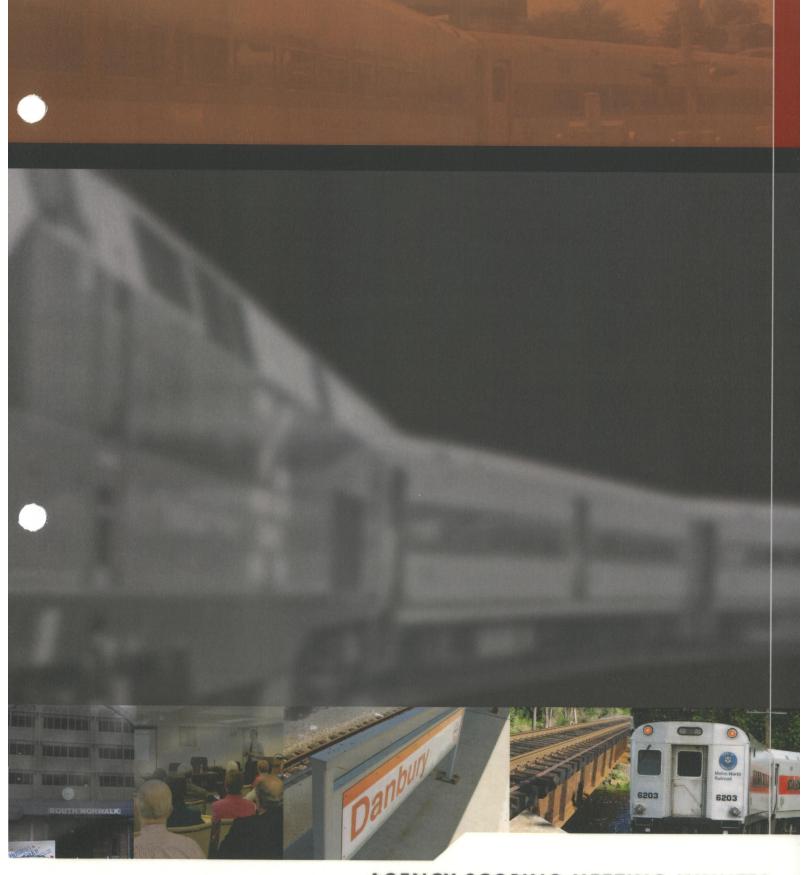
Location: Danbury City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Ave., Third floor Caucus rm., Danbury, CT

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Summary Review of Phase I Results
 - Five alternatives recommended for further study using Phase I Executive Summary.
- 3. Summary Review of Phase II Scope
 - Task 1 Project Management
 - Task 2 Coordination
 - o Study Advisory Committee
 - o Operating Railroads
 - o Federal & State Agencies
 - o Local & Regional Officials
 - Task 3 Public Outreach (Public Outreach/EIS Coordination Plan)
 - o Web Site, Press Releases, Mailings, Etc
 - o Public Information Scoping Meetings
 - o Pre-DEIS Public Information Meetings
 - o DEIS Public Hearings
 - Task 4 Mapping and graphics
 - Task 5 Environmental Data Collection and Evaluation
 - o Data Collection
 - o DEIS Impact Evaluation of Alternatives
 - Task 6 Transportation Alternatives Development and Evaluation
 - o Existing Conditions including Surveys
 - o Alternatives Development
 - o Travel Demand Forecasts
 - o Train Performance and Traction Power Models
 - Evaluation of Alternatives
 - o Financial Evaluation
 - o Transit Oriented Development
 - Task 7 Conceptual Engineering and Evaluation
 - o Existing Conditions



Washington Division

- o Track Improvements; minor realignments and passing sidings
- o Electrification; catenary and substations
- o Stations
- o Rail Vehicle Maintenance and Storage Facilities
- o Engineering Evaluation of Alternatives
- Task 8 DEIS
 - o Draft DEIS
 - o Agency Review
 - o Distribution, Hearings, and Comments
- Task 9 Final EIS
 - o Preferred Alternative
 - o Impacts and Mitigations
 - o Draft EIS Review
 - o ROD
- 4. Schedule for Phase II
- 5. Notice of Intent
- 6. EIS Coordination Plan
- 7. Questions and Comments



AGENCY SCOPING MEETING MINUTES



MEETING MINUTES

RE: Danbury Branch Phase II Alternatives Analysis/EIS

DESCRIPTION: Agency Scoping Meeting

MEETING DATE: June 17, 2008

MEETING TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Danbury Town Hall, 155 Deer Hill Ave., Danbury, CT

PERSONS IN ATTENDANCE:

<u>NAME</u> ORGANIZATION

Andrew Davis, Keith Hall, Carmine Trotta, Mark Foran, Robert Hammersley
Paul Stanton, Laurel Stegina
FHI

Stephen Gazillo, Tamara Gray, David Chase, Stuart Popper, Sandro Pani URS

Nelson Tereso, Jason Zheng

Frederick Riese

ConnDECD

ConnDEP

Richard Schreiner

HART

Johnathan Chew

HVCEO

Susan Lee Corps of Engineers
Katherine Daniel Brookfield
Dirk Perrefort News-Times

Floyd Lapp SWRPA

John Hartwell Candidate for State Senate

There were brief introductions of all attendees.

Andy Davis indicated the purpose of the meeting to follow EIS process in seeking Agency comments on the project scope. Also that FTA had issued the NOI with comment period through July 25, 2008. He then discussed the five alternatives identified for further consideration from Phase I and also provided a summary review of Phase II scope and schedule.

Andy Davis asked for agency comments:

Susan Lee from the Army Corp of Engineers asked about the original purpose of the study.

Mark Foran discussed the original purpose of the study. He noted that some of the potential benefits of increased ridership on the Danbury Branch Line will be decreasing the number of cars on the region's already congested roads such as Route 7.

Susan Lee raised various questions regarding the Scope of Work for Phase II. Many of her concerns were addressed by noting additional discussion of the item in latter sections of the scope. Susan mentioned that the

new school of thought regarding mitigation is the Wetland Banking is the first priority. She wanted to make sure that in the wetlands section of the scope we also cover/assess regulated streams. Paul Stanton explained that shortly (in July) the Team will be conducting field work that would involve walking the corridor and identifying regulated wetlands and streams. The Team will be documenting them photographically, conducting functions and values - essentially characterizing the resources. The Team will not be delineating wetlands at this time.

Susan pointed out the new Compensatory Wetland Mitigation rules that have published in the April 2008 Federal Register. Paul Stanton said he is aware of them and the new mitigation rations memorandum. This information will be used for this EIS.

Also she had the following requests and comments:

- She requested a joint field review and it was indicated that one would be held.
- COE in April 2008 issued a mitigation rule that is available on their website
- There are no federally recognized tribes in the corridor, but from past experience there should be coordination with the Narragansett Tribe. They have been commenting on most other projects
- Construction impacts must include both temporary and permanent work.
- To provide 3 copies each of hard copy and disk of the scope.
- Asked for a copy of the phase 1 final report. A copy was given to her after the meeting.

She will be submitting written questions and comments.

Frederick Riese of the DEP said he would be submitted detailed comments in writing. He asked about the status of the CTC Project. Mark Foran described the project and said that construction of the project would begin by 2011¹.

Other questions:

- How transit route will be configured.
- To what degree modifications to existing bridge structures will impact stream channels.

He had some recommendations as well:

- Coordinate with CL&P's 345 Kv transmission line that parallels the RR
- That the team conduct existing vibration measurements,
- Inspections of habitat/species
- Encourage pedestrians/cyclist to use stations.
- And noted that there are no farm lands in the corridor
- To be aware of possible development of the Century Brass property in New Milford
- Generic discussion should be included in the document about how transit routes will be configured to augment ridership.
- Stream Channel Encroachment Lines (SCEL) there are crossings of the Norwalk River. To what degree will the existing structures be expanded (if at all). There will be a need to limit SCEL encroachment in instances where expansion may be necessary.
- He noted that there were a lot of Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) sites along the corridor

 Final Design Completion
 03/03/10

 Advertising
 05/12/10

 Award Contract
 08/06/10

 Notice to Proceed
 10/20/10

 Construction Completion
 03/21/13

¹ The current schedule for the CTC project is as follows, based on procuring funding for the design.

(these are sites where threatened and/or endangered species may exist or where there is critical habitat.

ConnDECD – Written comments will be forth-coming.

Johnathan Chew of HVCEO noted that the scope covered the wishes of the public.

Robert Hammersly noted that the TSB had no comments

Floyd Lapp noted that SWRPA reserved right to comment to the end of the NOI comment period, July 25, 2008

Submitted by:

Reviewed by:

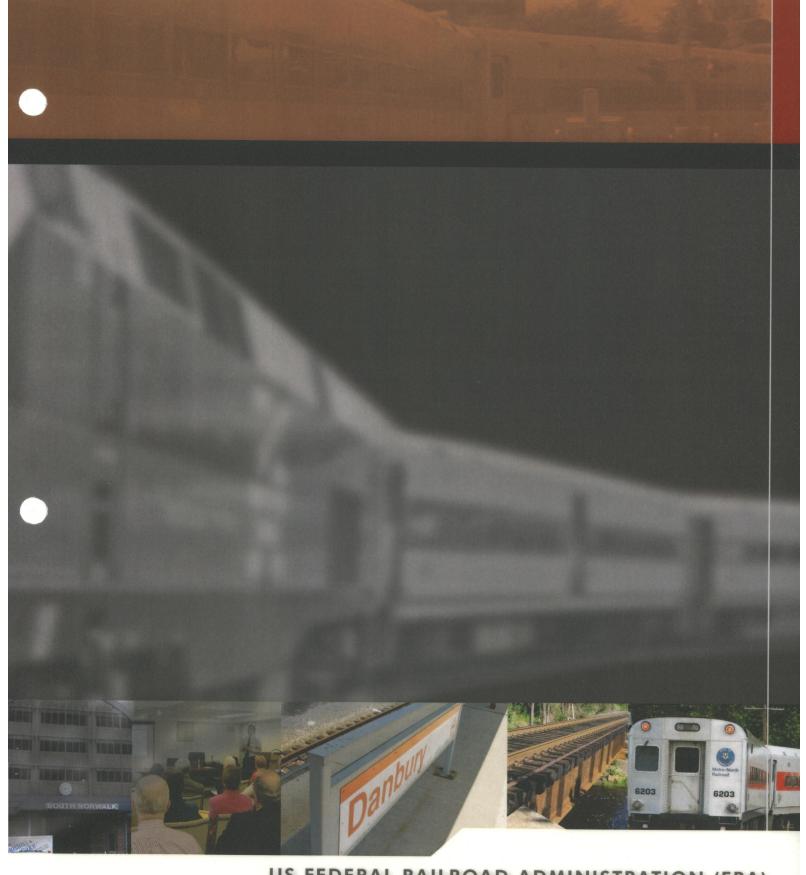
Tamara Gray URS

Stephen Gazillo IRS

6/30/08

6 | 50 | 8 | Date

Cc: Attendees File: 10.02



US FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION (FRA)
SCOPE OF SERVICES - COMMENTS



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Railroad Administration

JUL - 1 2008



1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Edgar T. Hurle Transportation Planning Director State of Connecticut 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546 Newington, CT 06131-7546

Dear Mr. Hurle:

My office has received your letter of May 12, 2008 inviting the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to be a cooperating agency in the Danbury Branch Line Study – Phase 2, Alternatives Analysis/NEPA and EEPA Documentation. We will be delighted to participate.

It would appear from the Scope of Services enclosed with your letter that the vast majority of the Phase 2 effort will involve only the Danbury Branch itself as you seek to improve commuter rail services to the various municipalities along that line. The Executive Summary of your May 2006 report on the Danbury Branch Electrification Study, also enclosed with your letter, describes a number of alternatives for improving train performance and operational reliability along the Danbury Branch; however, it does not discuss whether future additional trains are projected. Most of the existing Danbury Branch trains operate between the South Norwalk Station on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) main line and Danbury as connections to the New Haven Line commuter trains, with a few operating through to New York City during the normal commuting rush hours. These connecting trains typically sit on short stub end spur tracks on either side of the main line at the South Norwalk Station while awaiting their return trip to Danbury.

FRA would like to bring to your attention its July 1994 FRA Report to Congress (selected pages enclosed) identified the South Norwalk Station as a potential problem area due to the movement of the Danbury Branch trains across the 4 track NEC main line. If the proposed improvements to the Danbury Branch are anticipated to result in the operation of additional trains originating or terminating at the South Norwalk Station; the FRA would expect a full discussion of the operational impacts, if any, of these additional trains on the intercity passenger trains operated by Amtrak along the NEC.

The FRA would also like to note that your list of organizations being notified of the Alternatives Analysis/NEPA and CEPA Documentation for the Danbury Branch Line Study did not include Amtrak. Please add Amtrak by notifying Mr. Drew Galloway, Director of Transportation Planning at 30TH Street Station, 5TH Floor, South Box 21, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

The FRA believes it would be appropriate to advise Amtrak of these activities sooner, rather than later, due to the potential for impacting its Northeast Corridor services. Also, please address all future correspondence on this matter to: Mr. Richard U. Cogswell, Electronics Engineer, 1120 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Mail Stop 20, Washington, DC 20590.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Yachmetz

Associate Administrator

for Railroad Development

Enclosure

cc: John Bennett - Amtrak Drew Galloway - Amtrak

The Northeast Corridor Transportation Plan

New York City to Boston

U. S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration

Report to Congress

Office of Railroad Development

July 1994

experienced by revenue trains operating on the other three tracks as the signal system forces speed reductions and/or a stop to protect the crossing train movement. This delay would cascade back to succeeding trains until a gap between trains is large enough to absorb the delay. Normally, the ripple effect should be dissipated after two or three trains. With proper coordination, high-speed trains should not be adversely affected. However, as 2010 traffic levels are approached and delays increase in frequency and duration, a single track flyover is the only option that will provide a permanent solution to this major rush hour New Haven Line choke point.

Stamford. Besides handling through Amtrak and commuter trains, Stamford also originates trains. The interlocking improvements and the construction of the Stamford Station center island platforms will facilitate morning peak period operations as westbound trains coming out of Stamford Yard now must cross over the right-of-way to begin revenue service in a precise sequence. High-speed trains should not be affected, although potential conflicts may remain with other westbound Amtrak trains and commuter trains commencing service east of Stamford, which can be addressed through scheduling adjustments.

South Norwalk. The current proposed changes to the interlockings at Walk and Saga will address the peak period congestion problems on the local tracks by allowing zone express trains servicing stations east of South Norwalk access to the local tracks at these interlockings. Nevertheless, Danbury trains will continue crossing over all four tracks to access the branch and will remain a potential cause of delays.

2010 Canton Junction to South Station Congestion

The Monte Carlo™ simulations showed that the electrification, track alignment, signal improvements, interlocking improvements sidings, and electrically-hauled commuter trains would relieve passenger train congestion in the

Canton Junction to South Station corridor. With the full 2010 schedules, however, the importance of coordinated scheduling and dispatching increases.

2010 Freight Operations

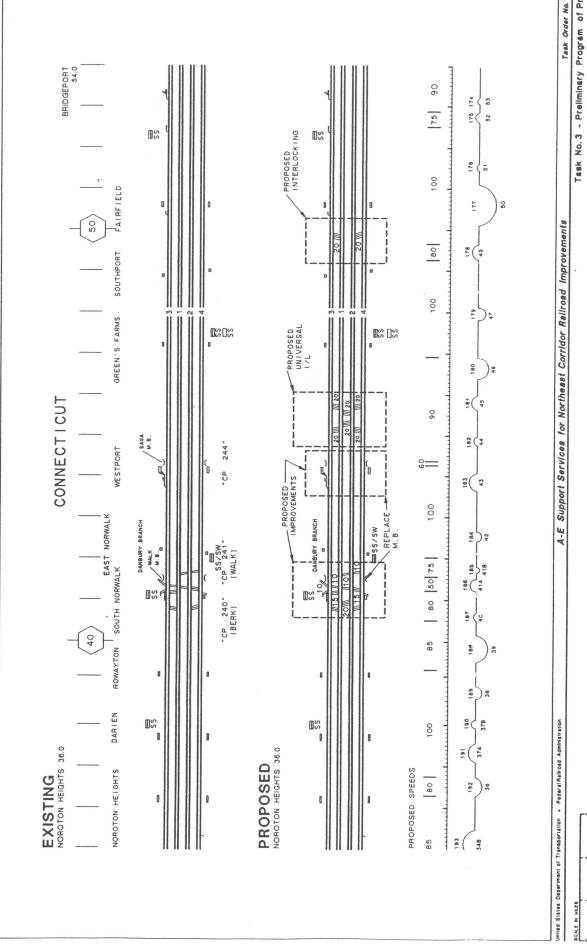
Simulations integrating freight operations east of New Haven with commuter and intercity operations were also conducted. A worst case situation in which all customers between Lawn and New Haven were served on a single day was assumed (although some are served only a few days each year). A Monte CarloTM simulation package was used.

The results indicated that adequate sidings would be needed for freight service to be conducted on the Corridor. Some of the existing sidings may need to be lengthened. Further analysis will be conducted to make these determinations.

Bridge Openings

There are 11 moveable bridges on the Corridor main line between New York City and the Connecticut/Rhode Island border, a distance of approximately 140 miles. Six of the bridges, one in New York and five in Connecticut, are operated by Amtrak; five are operated by MNCR. Federal regulations, enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard, govern the operation of each bridge (33 CFR, Chapter 1, paragraph 117). The regulations specify the hours during which bridges can be opened, procedures for requesting an opening, special procedures to be followed during emergencies, and related matters. (See Appendix L for the details of each agreement.)

Current train frequencies, especially outside the hours of peak commuter operations, do not present a major inconvenience to marine operators. To the degree that delays occur in scheduled or requested bridge openings, they are normally attributed to poor communications between train dispatchers and bridge operators. This problem will be addressed in late 1994 or early 1995 when the centralized electrification



Task Oo.3 - Preliminary Program of Projects

NOROTON HEIGHTS (36.0) TO BRIDGEPORT (54.0)

Existing And Proposed 2010 Track Configurations

D. LEUW, CATHER

August 19, 1993

Mr. Richard U. Cogswell Engineering USDOT Federal Railroad Administration 400 Seventh St., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Cogswell:

Enclosed are the 2013 Metro-North design timetables for the simulations agreed to at the July 13, 1993, meeting. Initially, Metro-North attempted to develop timetables based on increased commuter train speeds from the right-of-way and facility improvements proposed for the New Haven Line. This method appeared to make the most sense since intercity service was being simulated based on the increased speeds. Using the TPC to model the AM Peak timetable, commuter train schedules with reduced point to point running times were developed. Based on the criteria agreed to at the July 13 meeting, train speeds for commuter service are now consistent throughout the entire weekday schedule using current operating speeds.

Dispatching of the train service schedules was based on the following changes to the infrastructure:

- New Rochelle Flyover
- Stamford Center Island Platforms with associated interlocking changes
- Reconfigured New Haven interlocking
- Spur track off Track 3 at CP 223 to turn trains
- Restoration of Track 3 between New Haven and Devon

Other facility improvements which provide operational benefits for both intercity and commuter train services have been identified and are currently being reviewed (additional crosovers in the Stamford complex and west of Fairfield). Therefore, it would be premature to include these additional facility improvements in this dispatching exercise until agreement is reached among Metro-North, CDOT, Amtrak and FRA.

Schedule pads have been distributed throughout the individual train runs where appropriate. Also, the off-peak New Canaan trains which operate to and from Grand Central are identified in the schedule. CDOT has indicated that there is no current plan to place a passing track on the New Canaan Branch near the main line.

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	1530	6 1.08 C 1.18 1.29 1.30	. 34. S	1.40	1.46	25.04 1.55.2 8.04 8.04 8.04			£
WAS-BOS METRO	184 AMTRAK	ž.	1.20		-	6 W 60 60	49 49 49 49 49	60 60	£
	1330	C12.51 C12.51 12.54 C12.58 C12.58		22,75					£
1/2 HR EXP OFF PK	04MH10	612.38 612.48 12.51 12.59 1.00	20.	1.10	1.16	22222	21.54	786	£
	1328		\$12.36 12.41 12.41 \$12.42 \$12.46	12.55	23.65	20000			£
WAS-BOS	168 AMTRAK	£	12.38	<i></i>					E
	1826 DANBY	*				1.09 1.09	•	69	£
	1526	G12.08 C12.18 12.21 12.29	12.34	12.40	12.46			NA.	E
WAS-805 METRO	182 AMTRAK	*	12.20			WEWW W	00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00	w w ;	
	1326	C11.51 11.54 12.02 12.04	\$12.12 \$12.12 \$12.12 \$12.16	12.22	12.34 12.34 12.35	12.39		•	E
	1324	C11.21		511.52 11.54 811.55 8				-	E
WAS-SPG	480 AMTRAK	₹	11.38	W W W	<i>w w w</i>				<u> </u>
	1522	AM G11.08 C11.18 11.21 11.29	11.34	11.40	10.46	\$11.51 \$11.52 \$11.55 \$11.56 \$12.01 \$12.04	\$12.10 \$12.17 \$12.24 \$12.26	\$12.34 \$11.45 \$	<u> </u>
WAS-BOS METRO	180 AMTRAK	ŧ	11.20			N III N N N N	o o ou		E
	1322	G10.41 C10.51 10.54 C10.58 11.02	91229	11.24	133,7	11.42		:	 {
	1320	10.32 10.32 10.32 10.32	\$10.41 \$10.42 \$10.42 \$10.46 \$10.49	\$10.52 10.54 \$10.55 \$10.55	\$11.02 \$11.05 \$11.07 \$				E
WAS-BOS	166 AMTRAK	ŧ	10.38 510.40	<i>o o o</i>	N N N				
	1518	610.08 C10.18 10.21 10.29	10.34	10.40	10.46	\$10.51 \$10.52 \$10.55 \$10.58 \$11.04	\$11.10 \$11.14 \$11.17 \$11.23 \$11.26 \$11.26	811.34 8	i
WAS-BOS METRO	158 AMTRAK		10.20			w www w	ท ที่ที่ ที่ผู้ที่	<u> </u>	i
	1318	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	-	\$10.22 10.24 \$10.25 \$10.28	10.32	24.01.24		9	·
OFF-PK THRU	9408 DAMBY	8 9.42 9.53 9.53 9.53	6,00	0.06	10.12	\$10.19 \$10.20 10.24 10.32 \$10.33 \$10.35		3	
EFF. Rev. 8-12-93 EASTWARD	TRAIN FREQUENCY FREQUENCY NOTES	Grand Central Terminal G 125th Street (R) 125th Street (R) Forth Maven Jct. Fortham (E:190th St.)(R) CP112 Mount Vernon	Pelham CP216 New Rochelle Larchmont Mamaroneck		uresmich, com. CP229 Cos Cob Riverside	99	f farme f farme (d	Milford Mew Haven, Corn. Fair Street ARRIVE	Turn To Turn From Commecting Trains

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WAS-805 10"L	176 1 AMTRAK	40		9	<u></u>				462 84.	:	,	Ч		7	_			4		_		N				61	М	7		6.39				
WAS-					00		0	:	S S	0.0	~ 8	T:					_											_		8 6.		<u>*</u>		
	1254			9	5.30	5.38			N N	\$ 5.49	S			•				٣				7				•	*	_	F			<u>*</u>		
	1652		-	G 5.15	-	5.36	5.38		5.424		5 5.48	S	\$ 5.55	0	S	9 8	0	6.16	20.00	\$ 6.28	\$ 6.32	8 6.39	\$ 6.42	8 6.40	\$ 6.53	8.5	8	\$ 7.07	8 7.13	\$ 7.24		₹		
9	1452			5 5.13	5.26	5.34	5.36		5.412		287 3	-		5.542		_	\$ 5.59		9 9			9									į	£		
PHL-BOS NHV-SPG	476 AMTRAK		£																													E		
PHL-BOS	178 AMTRAK		¥						2.40%		*	4		N				н				7			0	V	7	,	1		97.0	E		-
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	1550		¥ S		5.14	5.22	2.54		2.28.5		5.35.2			5.412				5.452		_	400	-	90		.02	8	1	184	21	6.32	-	E		
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NEV MAVEN LINE NAS-BOS METRO	-			0 40		_					~ ~	-		9			48 5.34			_	•				-		4	-		\$ 6.06	-	E		
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	1846 DANBY			C 4.52	4.55	5.03	2.03	Ś	\$		5.152			5.212			\$ 5.263	5.28	\$ 5.36	\$ 5.40	8 5. E.										3	5		
	1546			0 4.49	64.4	4.57	4.04		2.03		5.10/			5.16/			1	112.6		-		5.32	5.35	5.42	5.43	5.52	S.54	P.O.	8.0	6.15	2			
	1246	;	¥ %	07.4	4.43	4.51	4.55	4.58	5.05	88	2.0	:										60	-	99	91	. 60		10	89	97	-			
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EFF. Rev. 8-12-93 EASTWARD	M M M	FREQUENCY NOTES	Grand Central Terminal	125th Street (R)	Fordham (E.190th St.)(R)	CP (12	Hount Vernon	Petham CP216	New Rochelle	Manaroneck	CP223	Rye Done	Greenwich, Conn.	CP229	Riverside	old Greenwich	Stanford	Noroton Neights	Darien	Rowayton South Montal	CP241	East Morvalk	Green's Farms	Southport	CP255	Bridgeport	100	CP261	Milford	Hew Haven, Corn.	Fair Street ARRIVE	707 70	Cornecting Trains	

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	1521	\$ 624 \$ 635 \$ 645 \$ 645	n w	207 s - 207 s	715 /	1022	1924	187	ķ.
	1419	632	8 646 8 646 8 652 8 652	10	711.	1111	25	730,	A 756
s.	1417	6243	6303	\$ 653 \$ 653 \$ 700		7141	1027	1221	£ £
BOS-WA	METRO 151 AMTRAK	S 628 638 6417		659	22 ×	71017	7151	s 720 l	*
	1315				6/1	8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8	60	25	A 33
	1313				1679	653/	6593 8 708		747 AM
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	1513	S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S	6223 8 623 8 634 8 634 8 634	n va	653.7 \$ 655	1659	202	7121	741 AM
	E .			6293 \$ 631 \$ 640 \$ 640	2 60	(559)	701	708.)	Ę
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MTR-UAS	61 AMTRAK	\$ \$451 \$ \$591	1909	/029	\$ 629 \$ 8303	6351	6421	(559	¥
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	1507	\$ 4533 \$ 504 \$ 5073 \$ 510 \$ 516	55 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 53 52 53 53		144 60	558((408)	6111	A 638
	1305					53.73			M 630
	1303				\$ 5003	8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8		22.22	M 600
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BOS-WAS	67 ANTRAK	60			40				*
	1301				\$ 1225.3	<u> </u>	3 12423 8 1244 8 1247	N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N	12 12
VESTUARD	Frequency Motes Frequency Motes LEAVE Fair Street	Milford Pr261 Stratford CP257 Bridgeport	CPSS Fairfield Southport Green's Farms Westport East Worwelk	CP241 South Morwalk Rowayton Darien Noroton Meights	ich	Cob mulch, Com.		Larchmont New Rochelle CP216 Petham 'ourt Vernon :P212	m (E.190th St.)(0) aven Jet. Street (D) Central Terminal ARRIVE from ting Trains

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BOS-VAS HETRO 155 AMTRAK		s 836			ery de Bassey en aparece de la					023	ŧ	
1551		\$0.50	8 823 8 825 8 827 828	** ** **	8 848 8 848 8 850 3	s 854 8 857 8 900	\$000 E	1116	1216	1726	0952 Al	
1639		736J 807 810J	\$ 817.5 8 819 820.3	, 928 s	836 9		8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8	8 850 8 850 8 852 8 854	8 858 8 901 8 903 8 904 8	9083	A 336	
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1437			8 736 736 737	\$ 803	8 814 8 814 7 7 7 7		823 824 826 836	* * * * \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	843 }	8503	926 NA	
1235										2222	919 M	
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1231									810 8	\$ 823 823 8273	MA 857	
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VESTVARD	Frequency Frequency Notes LEAVE Fair Street	Milford CP261	Stratford CP257 Bridgeport CP255	Fairfield Southport Green's Farms	Vestport East Worwelk CP-2000 Morvelk	Rowayton Darien Noroton Heights	CP234 Stanford Old Greenwich	CP229 Greenwich, Com,	Port Chester Rye CP223 Werrison	Hamproneck Larchmont New Rochelle CP216 Pelhem	/ernon a (E.190th St.)(D) wen Jet. itreet (D) entral Terminal AMRIVE o o	2

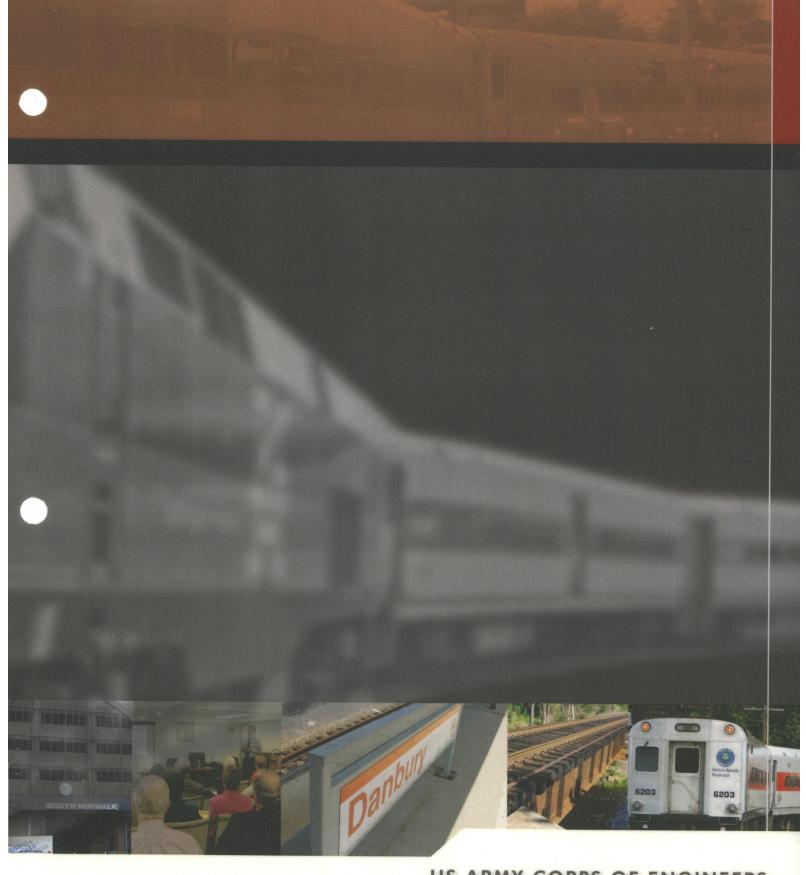
	1567	₹	\$ 1.58 \$ 2.09	S 22.20 22.20 22.20 22.20 22.20			2.58	3.04	3.10	W.W. 4.4.	3.24 8 3.38 PM	,
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0 11 0	1363	₹						8 2.16 8 2.16 8 2.19	RRACK KKKKK		0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	
80S-VA\$	185 AMTRAK	£				ø			2.2		E	
s	1563	£	\$12.58 \$ 1.09	s 1.20 s 1.20	s 1.37 1.37 1.39		1.58	2.04	2.10	2.14	2.24 8 2.38 F	
SPG-UAS	467 AMTRAK	£	w	•					\$ 2.08		E	
~	1361	£						17.4.4.5 17.4.4.5 17.4.4.5 17.4.6.5 17.	2.55		8 2:23 F 2:23	
1/2 HR EXP	04NH9	£	\$12.28	\$12.44 \$12.47 \$12.49 12.50 \$12.56	20.1.0 20.00	, ww w		1.34	1.40	23	2.57 8 2.08	
DBURY	94081	£			000		1.16	1.22	2. 2.	ri.	1.43 1.57 PH	
s	1359	£					s 1.02 1.04 1.04		inran		8 2.04 8 2.04 8 4.04	
80S-WA	AMTRAK	Ę	41						1.20			
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BOS-WAS	167 AMTRAK	₹	vı			6			8.			
	1357	₹						\$12.43 \$12.43 \$12.44 \$12.47	\$12.55 \$12.55 \$12.59 1.00		5 1.22 S 1.33	7
	PSNH7	₹	\$11.28 \$11.39	511.47 511.47 511.50	\$12.04 \$12.04			12.34	12.40	12.44	12.57 8 1.08	
SI SI	1355	NOON				00 213	\$12.02 \$12.04 \$12.06 12.07	\$12.09 \$12.13 \$12.14 \$12.17	22222	12.39 12.41	8 12.55 12.55 1.05 1.05	1555
BOS-WAS	METRO 181 AMTRAK	₹	60						12.20			
SI	1555	₹	\$10.58	11.17 \$11.19 11.20 \$11.26	11.39	S11.42 S11.42 S11.45	11.58	12.04	12.10	12.14	12.24 012.27 812.38	1355
SPG-NWV BOS-UAS	165 AMTRAK	₹	<u>ه</u>	w					\$12.00 12.01		£	~
N-9dS	465 AMTRAK	₹	S								*	
	1855	₹			11.29	11.40					\$	1826
EFF. Rev. 8-12-93 UESTUARO	TRAIN	FREQUENCY NOTES FREQUENCY MOTES LEAVE	fair Street New Haven, Comm. Milford	CP261 Streetford CP257 Bridgeport CP256 Feirfield	Southport Green's Farms Westport East Morwalk CP241	South Morwalk Rowayton Darien Noroton Heights CP234	old greenwich Riverside Cos Cob CP229	Greenwich, Corn. Port Chester Rye CP223 Harrison	Mameroreck Larchmont New Rochelle CP216 Pelham	Hourt Vernon CP212 CP112	Forchem (E.190th St.)(D) Mott Haven Jct. 125th Street (D) Grand Cantrel Terminal	Turns from Turns to Cornecting Trains

	1069 HO	E																						(87.7	9	63 7	6.53	7 01		7.15	E		
	1061 PM	ž																			16.5			172.7	,	* 7	6.40	87 Y	}	7.02	E		
	1379	£														6.053	60.9	\$ 6.11	6.123	S 6.	6 6.213		\$ 6.30	A 4	6.38	6.41	. 49	6.50		s 7.09	E		
1/2 HR EXP	97NH19	E		\$ 5.283	\$ 5.397	\$ 5.44		50	00.0	70 4	\$ 6.07	8 6.10		\$ 6.15	6.213	\$ 6.23			6.285	-	772 7			4 402	2	77 7	3		6.57	8 7.08	E		
	£ 4	£ £		5.103	×		5.30	5.36				5.4.5		-	5.57		•														E		
BOS-VAS	193 AMTRAK	E		\$ 5.34/											15		-							700	5 :								
	1579	ž		\$ 4.583	\$ 5.09	\$ 5.16	\$ 5.173			8 5.31		5.403		5 5.49		_		•	6.03	0000	7 115			4 182	0	7 33	6.24	¢ 43		\$ 6.46	E		
	105S	ž																			7 60 7	3		1 16 1	3	94 7	6.21	8		6.43	E		
	1057 DM	ž	:																					2	51.0	4 42	6.19	4.27		6.41	E		
S*L EXT TO	1377	ž														55.403	25.44	85.46	5.473	55.53	55.56	5.59	3.8	5.09	. 13. E. 13.	6.16	6.21	2 2	6.32	6.43	E		
2"E SPG-NHV BOS-WAS	173 AMTRAK	Z	:	s 5.061	_	>		7.				•			75	\$ 5.44 \$ 55.403	•	-			-	-		2. S		-				67			
SPG-NHV	473 AMTRAK	Z		:			67									S								<u> </u>	•								
	180%	2		N 1						-				5.24		5.35		•	5.39}	-	197 5			K 822	35.5	72 2	8.50	80.4	60.9	8.3	E		
20"FRQ	985711	*	:									61	S	S		5.203 s	2.5	5.26	5.279	5.33	2.30	5.39	5.45	64.8	in.	23	6.01	8.8	6.12 0	z.	E		
,	1049 DM											-				lu c	n un	60	•	n vı	S		9 69	4 477	-	-	8	0 21	_	8 12.9			
	1143 DH	5 2	:								-	5.123			5.20}	,			5.28}		4 22 3			A21 2	-	_	5.51	9 05.5	_	6.15	-		
		X 14	:							-		5.15			5.203 5				•					_		-	. 80	-	-	•			
	1047 HQ	<u> </u>													-	;		_			28.7	î		4 473		- 47	5.49	25.5		. I.	_		
1/2 HR EXP	94NH17	ž		4.283	4.39	77.7	4.473	4.503	000	8	5.07	5.03	:		5.173	5.19		•	5.243		201			272			5.42		-	_			
3 % E	1375			49		4	m ev	•			S	40					20.00			13		.19	เห					_	٥	89	_		
	1273															50 6	0 80 0 80	S		1 00		80 6	0 0	n ~	90	90	101	0_	0	69			
WAS		-		79	_		_	_				4			3			-	7		7	50	\$ 5.21	10	69	W		5.4.8	0 5.49				
BOS-WAS			_	\$ 4.36																				2 201						8			
				53.55	84.06	\$4.11	2.75	4.17	\$4.26	24.28	\$4.35	\$4.39	24.42	97.75	£4.53	\$4.55			8.8		8			5.15	:	0	5.21	5.29	05.32	3.5			
EFF. Rev. 8-12-93 VESTUARD	TRAIN	FREQUENCY MOTES LEAVE	Fair Street	New Haven, Conn.	Milford CP261	Stratford	CP25/ Bridgeport	CP255	Southport	Green's Farms	East Norwelk	South Morwalk	Fowayton	Norospo Nejahta	CP234	Stanford	Riverside	Cos Cob	CP229	Port Chester	Rye CP223	Harrison	Larchmont	CP216	Pelham	CP212	CP112	Hott Maven Jct.	125th Street (D)	Grand Central Terminal	Turns from	Tornecting Trains	

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US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SCOPE OF SERVICES - COMMENTS

Subject: CTDOT/FTA Danbury Branch Line EIS Study (COE File # NAE-2008-1354)

<u>Danbury Branch Line Study - Phase 2 Alternatives Analysis/ NEPA and CEPA</u>

<u>Documentation</u> - COE comments on Scope of Services document (Response to May 12, 2008 transmittal from CTDOT)

The following comments are provided for your information and use:

- 1. Task 4: Page 15 and 16, Section 4.1 GIS Data Layers: information to be mapped; wetlands and wetlands functions and values bullets; it's not clear if this also includes water bodies (streams, brooks, rivers etc.); water bodies and their functions and values should be included in mapped information. Perennial and intermittent streams are regulated under CWA. Wetland functions and values bullet: the COE recommends a method for graphic presentation of wetlands functions/values in accordance with COE guidance publication entitled The Highway Methodology Workbook Supplement Wetland Functions and Values A Descriptive Approach, November 1995 (Workbook Supplement). A PDF version is available on our New England District website. Hardcopies were provided to consultant at the June 17, 2008 agency scoping meeting at Danbury City Hall. The COE suggests mapping of wetlands resources to include the graphic presentation of the hydrological connection to the nearest tributary stream (named or unnamed) and identification of the stream, brook, etc. if the wetland is not already displayed as a riparian wetlands or adjacent wetlands associated with a named or unnamed water body. Graphic display of wetlands/water body resources on aerial photography is acceptable. For the linear corridor, a tabular listing of the wetlands resources to be identified in the study corridor and its attributes is recommended (see attached table format).
- 2. Task 5: Page 19, Section 5.2.2 Biological Diversity: this section does not include a separate heading for wetlands resources. The DEIS document should include a separate assessment/characterization of wetlands/waters resources and associated functions and values in accordance with the descriptive approach described in guidance the Workbook Supplement. Workbook Supplement is attached for your information and use.
- 3. Task 5: Page 20, section 5.2.2 Vegetation wetlands vegetation identification should include description and classification in accordance with US Fish and Wildlife Service publication <u>Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States</u> (Cowardin).
- 4. Task 5: Page 20, section 5.2.2 Fisheries it is not clear if this section will also be documented in conjunction with the assessment/characterization of water bodies in the study corridor. Similar to wetlands, the assessment of water body (rivers, streams, brooks, etc.) resources should be in accordance with the descriptive approach method described in the Workbook *Supplement*.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS 696 VIRGINIA ROAD CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742-2751

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

Regulatory Division CENAE-R-PEB File No. NAE-2008-1354 July 25, 2008



Attn: Mr. Edgar T. Hurle Connecticut Department of Transportation P.O. Box 317546 2800 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06131-7546

Dear Mr. Hurle:

This follows up on the agency scoping meeting of June 17, 2008 regarding the Danbury Branch Line Study - Phase 2 Alternatives Analysis/NEPA and CEPA Documentation.

The Corps has reviewed the scope of services document (CTDOT transmittal letter dated May 12, 2008). Our comments are enclosed for your information and use.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The Corps looks forward to working with you on this study. If you have any questions on the comments, please feel free to contact me at (978) 318-8494.

Sincerely,

Susan K. Lee

Senior Project Manager Regulatory Division

Enclosure

Attn: Mr. Andrew Davis Connecticut Department of Transportation P.O. Box 317546 2800 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06131-7546

- 5. Task 5: Page 21, section 5.2.4 Wetlands The COE recommends a descriptive approach narrative for the assessment/characterization of wetlands/waters resources and associated functions and values. The level of detail and scope of information recommended by the COE to support the permit review process is described in the COE's Workbook Supplement guidance publication. It is not clear if water bodies are included in this section since there is not a separate heading for assessment/characterization of water body resources in the study corridor. Similar to wetlands, the assessment of water bodies should be in accordance with the descriptive approach method described in the Workbook Supplement. The assessment of wetlands/water bodies should include description and identification in accordance with Cowardin classification.
- 6. Page 31: section 5.3.4 Wetlands last sentence: the COE expects that the level of detail/scope of information regarding wetlands/waters resources in the DEIS will be such that it can serve to support the informational needs for the future section 404 permit review process. The COE notes also that this does preclude the COE from requesting additional information, as necessary, when we get to the permit application and review process.
- 7. Page 31: **Field Review of Potentially Impacted Wetlands** the COE expects that the wetlands/waters information developed for the DEIS document can be used to support the wetlands/waters informational requirements for the future section 404 permit application. For the linear project with multiple wetlands along the corridor, the COE recommends that the document include a tabular display of wetlands/waters as shown in the attached table format. This table format represents minimal information that the COE will need to identify and review wetland/waters resource information, in addition to the wetlands assessment narrative, as part of the permit application review process.
- 8. Page 32: last sentence regarding quantification of wetland impact size in addition to quantification of permanent direct fill impacts, anticipated temporary fill impacts in wetlands/waters such as for construction access roads, cofferdams, etc. should also be included in the quantification of impacts.
- 9. Page 33: ...mitigation options... ...conceptual wetland mitigation plan... the COE recently issued new guidance regarding compensatory mitigation for aquatic resource impacts. Identification of mitigation considerations will need to follow the New England District guidance (http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/reg/mitigaadd.pdf), and the new 'Mitigation Rule' guidance (document available at: http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/news/final mitig rule.pdf
- 10. Page 39: section 5.3.16: Construction Impacts anticipated temporary impacts (such as construction access roads, cofferdams for construction, etc.), if required in wetlands/waters to facilitate project construction, should also be identified if these impacts are foreseeable.
- 11. Page 51: section 6.6.2 Station/Facility Impacts, second paragraph it is not clear what the nature and scope of '...parking and off-site or access improvements necessary...' are.

If such improvements associated with new stations/facilities will also entail additional aquatic resource impacts, these additional aquatic resource impacts should be identified/quantified and included in the impacts discussion for the particular build alternative.

- 12. Page 59: Task 8 General Comment regarding alternatives evaluation: this section addresses the actual preparation of the DEIS, which will use the information developed in sections 1-7 of the Phase 2 scope of services tasks. I don't quite follow the order of the various sections and tasking in each section regarding alternatives since there are several sections in the scope of services document that involve identification/evaluation of alternative sites for stations, horizontal realignments, etc. leading to the identification of a preferred alternative. The COE acknowledges that the outer limit of potential improvements would practicably be sited within reasonable proximity to the existing rail corridor from South Norwalk to New Milford, and that the alternatives will need to be sited such that they also address the needs of the communities and region served by the rail corridor. Pursuant to the regulatory review requirements of the CWA Section 404 permit review process, the COE expects that your alternatives evaluation exercises will take into account effects on wetlands/water resources such that the preferred alternative(s) that are identified will comply with the alternatives evaluation requirements of the CWA section 404 b(1) Guidelines. General guidance for integrating COE Section 404 permit Requirements with your NEPA EIS process is provided in the COE publication entitled Highway Methodology Workbook - Integrating Corps Section 404 Permit Requirements with Highway Planning and Engineering and the NEPA EIS Process (Highway Methodology Workbook). The Highway Methodology Workbook is attached. In brief, the COE expects that the preferred alternative(s) that is identified in the NEPA document will be the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative in compliance with the CWA Section 404b(1) Guidelines, and that the information developed for the DEIS can serve to support the informational requirements of the Section 404 application to the COE. The COE looks forward to working with you as you develop and refine alternatives once you have identified aquatic resource constraints. For ease of review, the COE recommends that wherever there are alternatives evaluations exercises pursuant to identification of a preferred location/alternative, that there will be a tabular documentation of the evaluation considerations/factors, to include aquatic resource impacts.
- 13. Page 59: **section 8.2 Purpose and Need** the COE will review your Phase 1 Purpose and need statement, and provide a basic project purpose determination statement in accordance with our interagency coordination procedures described in the <u>Highway Methodology Workbook</u>.
- 14. Page 59: section 8.3 Description of Alternatives Phase I Feasibility Study alternatives If not already intended, the discussion of Phase I alternatives in the DEIS should include adequate discussion on why each alternative was eliminated for further study in the DEIS. In addition, a tabular display of Phase 1 alternatives and rationale for elimination is recommend for ease of review. FTA Alternatives Analysis (AA) process: this task says that an FTA AA process will run concurrently with the DEIS process. It is not clear

what this concurrent process is. Q: is the FTA AA exercise the same alternatives identification and evaluations information as that to be included in the DEIS?

- 15. Page 64: section 8.8 Summary of Mitigation see comments on mitigation in item #8.
- 16. Page 69: section 9.6 Summary of Mitigation see comments on mitigation in item #8.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. The COE looks forward to working with you on this study. If you have questions on the comments, please feel free to write or call.

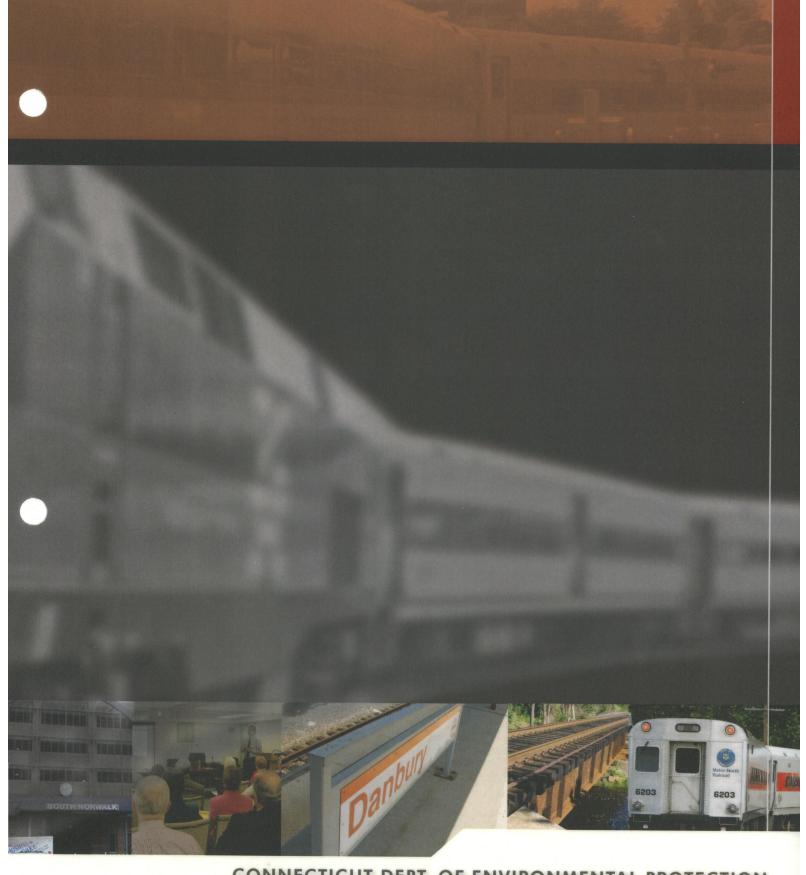
Susan Lee

Sr. Project Manager

USACE - New England District

Regulatory Division

978-318-8494



CONNECTICUT DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SCOPE OF SERVICES - COMMENTS



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



July 25, 2008

Carmine P. Trotta
Connecticut Department of Transportation
Bureau of Policy and Planning
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, Connecticut 06131

Re: Notice of Scoping
Danbury Branch Rail Line Alternatives Analysis

Dear Mr. Trotta:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft Scope of Services for Phase II of the Danbury Branch Alternatives Analysis and the resulting environmental impact statement (EIS). The scope as drafted is very thorough and inclusive and should result in a comprehensive evaluation of the five potential alternatives and their impacts. DEP wishes you well with this Phase II study and the resultant effort to enhance public transportation and to provide more and better options to the use of private vehicles for commuting and other travel needs in this corridor.

The following comments deal with both the draft scope of services and the resources of the study corridor from Norwalk to New Milford.

Natural Diversity Data Base Species

There are a significant number of occurrences of State-listed endangered, threatened and special concern species in proximity to the Danbury Branch rail corridor. Via correspondence of May 23, 2008 and June 23, 2008 to Linda Perelli Wright of Fitzgerald and Halliday, the listed animal and plant species, respectively, in the corridor have been furnished by biologists with the DEP Natural Diversity Data Base. The locations of the occurrences of the nine listed plant species and fifteen listed animal species have also been provided.

The locations of the species vary in their proximity to the rail line from virtually adjacent to it out to the 500' limits of the requested study corridor. Therefore, the likelihood for impact to them will also vary on whether trackside work elements like electrification or the installation of centralized traffic control (CTC) are undertaken, or larger footprint activities such as realignments, passing sidings, electrical substations, or new passenger stations are constructed. The information provided in the two above-referenced letters is detailed as to the specific species, their classifications, and their locations, and thus will not be repeated here.

On a related note, the Weantinogue Heritage Preserves, a regional land trust, owns one or more parcels in the vicinity of the Still River and Danbury Branch project area. These properties are home to species of special concern. If any project work is proposed in the vicinity of these preserves, the

consultant team should consult with Weantinoge Heritage which can be contacted by phone at (860) 355-3500.

Trails and Greenways

There are several designated and proposed greenways in the vicinity of the Danbury Branch. The Norwalk River Valley Trail (Norwalk) and the proposed Route 7 Linear Trail (Wilton to Redding) are located near the rail line and could potentially be impacted by activities which expand the rail corridor footprint, or by significant realignment. The South Western Regional Planning Agency can be contacted for additional information about these trails.

There are two officially designated State greenways located within or in close proximity to the northern portion of the study corridor. The Still River Greenway follows along the Still River in Danbury and Brookfield where the rail line has a more east-west orientation, while the Housatonic Riverbelt Greenway would be crossed as the line extends into New Milford center. The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials can be contacted for more information on these greenways and the current state of the planning efforts for them.

In addition to these greenways, there is a Housatonic River Trail which is a water/paddling trail that is being developed by interested citizens and communities along the Still River (starting in Danbury) and the Housatonic River (from New Milford, south). For more information, see: http://www.hvce.org/rivertrail.php

Land Use Data Collection

Several minor points merit mention concerning section 5.2.9, Land Use, of the draft scope. In the identification of the listed land use categories, it would be helpful to provide the definition that is used to delineate the Parks and Open Space category of land. The term 'open space' has been defined in various ways and might include only lands that are permanently protected by deed or easement, or might include other areas of undeveloped land not permanently protected. Therefore, the definition used in your study should be provided. Along these lines, it might also be useful to include a separate category for 'utility lands' such as water company and hydropower development lands since they may have certain legal restrictions or other implications that are unique from other types of land. Lastly, along the lines of the previous section of these comments, officially designated State greenways and trails should be identified and displayed. A list and map of officially designated State greenways can be found on the DEP website at:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323852&depNav_GID=1704&depNav=

Surface and Groundwater Resources

Regarding Section 5.2.11 of the scope dealing with surface and groundwater resources, to be consistent with terminology used by the DEP Aquifer Protection Area Program, the following two items, "Aquifers (Levels A and B)" and "Aquifer Protection Zones", should be combined and modified to read: Aquifer Protection Areas (Level A & B Maps). For more information, see the DEP website at: http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2685&q=322252&depNav_GID=1654 In addition, the consultant team may wish to include aquifer areas, if any, that are protected by a municipality beyond that which is required by the DEP (i.e., municipal "aquifer protection zones"). The consultant team should also consider including sand and gravel aquifers that have potential as future water supply areas. Also, certain drinking water information, such as the location of public wellheads, etc., is restricted for

national security reasons. While it is important that the location of public drinking water supply wellheads be taken into account as part of this study, the consultant team should consult with the Department of Public Health (DPH) Drinking Water Section with regard to how this information should be handled head. For more information, see the DPH website at:

http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3139&q=387304&dphNav_GID=1824&dphNav=

Section 5.3.11, Surface and Groundwater Resources (p. 35), as currently written, seems to propose to only evaluate the impact of the proposed project on drinking water resources. However, the impact of the proposed project on all water resources and water resource values (i.e., aquatic habitat, water-based recreation, etc.) should be considered. Also in this section, the 2002 Connecticut Erosion and Sedimentation Guidelines and 2004 Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual should be consulted with regard to erosion and sedimentation controls and stormwater management for any project components that involve construction.

Public Recreation Lands

The title for Section 5.2.12, Recreational/4(f)/6(f) Lands (p. 25), may be misleading or inaccurate. The opening sentence for this section refers to "public open space". As mentioned earlier, the term "public open space" can have a number of interpretations. The proposed inventory provided in this section appears to include types of lands (i.e., wildlife refuge areas, etc.) that may not necessarily be intended for recreational purposes. While many conservation and multi-use lands allow for recreation, their primary use may be for species and habitat conservation, forestry, etc. In some cases, it may not be appropriate to use these areas for recreational purposes if they are home to species of special concern (i.e., certain land trust properties, etc.). Perhaps the title for this section should be expanded to read: Recreational, Conservation and Multi-Use Lands. However, if the content of this section is intended to solely address recreational lands, then these other categories of conservation and multi-use lands should be covered elsewhere in the data collection section.

Also, as mentioned earlier, the Section 5.2.12 inventory should also include officially designated State greenways. It should be noted that greenways can serve many functions (i.e., stream buffer, wildlife corridor, etc.) and are not necessarily intended in all cases for recreational use such as trails.

Specifically regarding this department, DEP does not own any state park, state forest or wildlife management area properties within the existing Danbury Branch corridor. The sole DEP-owned property along the Danbury Branch is Norwalk River Flood Control Site 3 which is located on both sides of the Norwalk River and lying in both Ridgefield and Redding. This property was originally acquired for the purpose of constructing a flood control dam on the Norwalk River, the construction of which was predicated on the relocation of Route 7, which currently runs through the site where the dam would be constructed. There are no current plans for this flood control project to be built. DEP has just recently entered into a long-term renewable lease with the Town of Ridgefield to allow the town to construct baseball fields on a portion of the property. Of the four separate parcels which constitute this DEP holding, only the smallest and easternmost of the parcels directly abuts the rail line.

Lovers Leap State Park Scenic Reserve in New Milford abuts the potential northern extension of the Danbury Branch line. This property lies between the rail line and the northern extremity of Lake

Lillinonah. This property is currently undeveloped by DEP but there have been some improvements undertaken by local interests.

Stream Channel Encroachment Lines

The Danbury Branch makes at least seven crossings of the Norwalk River, all of which are within the segment of that watercourse on which stream channel encroachment lines (SCEL) have been established pursuant to C.G.S. section 22a-342. At this point, it is not known if any changes will be necessary to any of the existing bridges which would involve work to the abutments, supporting piers or superstructure of the bridges such that the profile of the bridges as they affect flood flows could be altered.

The Stream Channel Encroachment Line Permits which might otherwise be required under C.G.S. section 22a-342 for work within the established lines would not required in this instance due to the exemption contained in C.G.S. section 16-344, which applies to properties operated under Metro-North. However, any work within the SCEL limits should be designed to avoid impacting flood storage volumes or floodwater levels. The exemption of C.G.S. 16-344 would also apply to any potential need for floodplain management certification under C.G.S. 25-68 but would not exempt any physical improvements on the line from potential permit requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Other Potentially Impacted Areas and Resources

The study might also wish to include the following potentially impacted areas and resources:

Housatonic River Hydroelectric Project: Although it is difficult to tell from the scale of maps consulted, it is possible that the rail line study corridor overlaps with the FERC regulated project boundary for the First Light Power Resources – Housatonic River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2576). More specifically, there may be overlap with the Shepaug Dam/Lake Lillinonah hydropower development at the northern border of the project area in New Milford. FERC issued a new license for the Housatonic River Hydroelectric Project in 2004. The consultant team should ascertain whether or not any of the license requirements affect the study corridor and the Danbury Branch project.

New Milford Aquifer Protection Area (APA): It appears that the northern terminus of the project area falls with the Aquifer Protection Area of the United Water Company's New Milford system near the center of New Milford. Specifically the aquifer protection areas of the Fort Hill Road and Indian Field wellfields would encompass the northern terminus of the study corridor. The consultant team should consult with the DEP Aquifer Protection Area Program regarding the Danbury Branch project. Kim Czapla of that program can be contacted at (860) 424-3335.

Likewise, the consultant team should consult the DEP list of final and proposed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) list for waterbodies in the project area (i.e., the Norwalk River). For more information, see the DEP website at:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&q=325604&depNav_GID=1654#Proposed DEP Aquatic Toxicity/TMDL Program staff should also be consulted with regard to TMDLs that are under development for other waterbodies in the project area (i.e., Still River –for phosphorus). Traci lott of this program can be contacted at (860) 424-3082 in this regard.

Miscellaneous Scoping Comments

The scope contemplates analysis of connections between the Danbury Branch rail line and the transit services of Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART), the Norwalk Transit District, Connecticut Transit and the rideshare brokerages, as set forth in Section 6.1.4. Review of the systems and schedules for these potentially connecting modes is appropriate and beneficial. However, the scope does not appear to include any language concerning the evaluation of opportunities to facilitate increased intermodal travel through optimizing schedules and routes to increase the utility of other modes to support Danbury Branch travel. Opportunities to encourage bicycle/train intermodal trips should also be discussed.

The scope contains a fairly ambitious two-phase analysis (Section 6.8) into the possibilities for transit-oriented development along the line. DEP endorses this effort to leverage transportation investment dollars by encouraging supportive land uses in proximity to existing and proposed stations. The scope contemplates local cooperation and partnership in this planning effort, which is absolutely necessary if a meaningful product is to result. DEP looks forward to reviewing the outcome of this effort.

DEP is supportive of ConnDOT's efforts to increase public transportation options and specifically wishes you well with your investigation into options for enhancements to the Danbury Branch service though this study. We look forward to participating on the Study Advisory Committee as this study progresses. If you have any question concerning any aspect of these comments, feel free to call me at (860) 424-4110.

Respectfully, Frederick L. Riese

Frederick L. Riese

Senior Environmental Analyst